

CLARA BARTON

We clip the following beautiful tribute to this noble woman from an editorial in the August number of *Autumn Leaves*.

"Into the shell shattered city of Strasburg on the morning after its capitulation to the Grand Duke of Baden, there walked unattended save by a maid a slight, delicate woman in a dark, plain dress, with a scarlet cross wrought in her sleeve above the elbow. Through the battalions of conquering troops which guarded the city she went fearlessly, unchallenged and unmolested, and the sentinels on the ramparts grounded their muskets as she touched the scarlet symbol on her arm, and hurried past them over the heaps of dead and dying; into the heart of the stricken city. She found famine, fire, terror, a shattered city surrendering through hunger, its hospitals filled with wounded women and children, its streets swarming with half-naked, half-starved, frenzied people, a city whose able-bodied men were all in the conscripted ranks of the French army or in the prisons of Germany.

Through the instrumentality of the stranger, in forty days the hungry were fed, the sick healed and the naked clothed. Boxes of supplies came by the hundreds into the city, marked ever by the scarlet symbol she wore, money poured into her treasury faster than she could spend it, and scores of brave nurses and heroic assistants gathered about her. White hands that had never known labor bound the scarlet badge on their arms, and the proudest ladies of Germany, under the sign of the crimson cross, went down to the help and succor of the city which their troops had conquered. Indeed, so abundant were the offerings of clothing that a message was sent to the Empress "You are making paupers of Strasburg with your generosity; send me material rather than clothing, that I may hire them made up here, and thus create an industry for the people." The material was sent, and twice each week hundreds of women went to her door with baskets on their arms to receive their work, for which they were abundantly paid. Forty thousand neatly fashioned garments of assorted sizes were packed in boxes stamped with the scarlet cross.

The Commune had fallen in Paris. The crash of the column Vendome still thrilled in the startled air. The flames of the Hotel de Ville lit the city with a lurid light. The streets were reeking with blood, and the air was heavy with the groans of the dying.

Suddenly there appeared the same vision of mercy that came to the need of Strasburg. Pale, dust-covered, travel-worn, and well nigh exhausted, for she had walked seven miles into the city (30,000 horses having been eaten by the people there were none left for transportation). The German troops outside the city detained her with no questions when they caught the gleam of the scarlet cross. Cordons of French soldiers guarding the streets lowered their bayonets as she touched the glowing symbol, and the sullen frenzied mob made way for her to pass.

The Mayor had been reinstated in

his office but a few hours, the dust of months lay thick on books and papers, his assistants were hurrying to and fro and writing frantically. The mayor himself was anxious, weary, heart-sick. Suddenly a soft voice sounded in his ear, an earnest, resolute, tender woman's face was lifted to his own, he caught the gleam of the scarlet cross, and heard the low clear words, "mayor, I have come to help you. I have 40,000 garments in my boxes outside the city, and plenty of money." The mayor's house was instantly at her disposal, but she argued, "It is too grand for my work; give me some humble place where the poor will not be afraid to come to me."

"Madam, eight months ago I left my home, as I supposed, to be burned to-day through the grace of God, it stands intact. Is it too good for God's poor? Make it your headquarters—they will go to you anywhere."

The history of Strasburg repeats itself, and the hungry were fed the naked clothed, the poor taught self-helpfulness, and then the woman of the red cross vanished.

When the Mississippi overflowed its banks in 1884, the people were without food, money, or seed for the next season's planting, suddenly out of the turbulent waters a steamer laden to her guards with every variety of provender, sustenance and comfort for man and beast, came to the rescue of the suffering people. Whence she came, how provisioned, by whom supplied, no one knew; only a woman stood at the helm, with a cross of crimson on her sleeve, and at the mast a banner floated—a shield of white crossed with scarlet bars. When the floods abated and the needs were all supplied, the strange craft vanished and her colors were hauled down in an unknown port.

High up in the Balkin mountains the soldiers of Bulgaria were freezing and dying for want of supplies. Word came to the woman with scarlet cross, was forwarded to her colleagues in various cities, and before night this telegram was sent from New Albany: "Call on us for \$500 for the Balkin soldiers." The message was cabled to Geneva, Switzerland, the next morning: "The Red Cross of America sends \$500 to the Balkan soldiers." Telegrams were sent from Bulgaria, goods were purchased to that amount, and the next day after the woman of the red cross received the call of need, high up in the fastness of the Bulgarian mountains, the soldiers were receiving the warm garments sent by the people of New Albany. Who is this mysterious woman that controls the soldiers of opposing armies, and commands the Exchange of the world with a gleam of a scarlet cross.

Heroes of the rebellion know her as the first woman nurse to bring comfort and succor to the wounded. Surgeons remember when her white tented wagons drove upon the fields the things most needed were at hand. The army of the Potomac know her, and the heroes of Morris Island have never forgotten the only woman who remained on the island, caring for the wounded while the shot and shell fell like hail. The Andersonville prisoners remember the woman who took them by the hands, and the widows

and mothers of the Andersonville dead will ever remember her at whose request the bodies of the 30,000 men who died there were identified and buried in marked graves. The sufferers of the Ohio floods, Michigan fires, Charleston earthquake, Texas drouth, and recent Mount Vernon tornado can tell you who she is, and every sovereign in Europe knows well the name and works of Clara Barton the president of the American red cross.

The *Kansas Farmer's* report of the action of the State Alliance upon the subject of a state paper is slightly at variance with the facts, and is calculated to mislead its readers in several particulars. The *Farmer* says:

"Some feeling was shown by a few delegates when the question came up for naming the *Kansas Farmer* as the official State paper as they wished to name a certain local paper for a State paper, but the more conservative delegates held that it would be impracticable to try and build up a local paper to the pretensions of a State paper, and while many delegates had been instructed to have the *Farmer* named, the motion to select an 'organ' was tabled and the question of a state paper remains as it was before this meeting, and the *Kansas Farmer* will continue to publish in its 'Alliance Department' official announcements of both State organizations as well as other important Alliance matter of interest to members as well as farmers in all parts of the State."

The inaccuracies of the above statement are as follows: 1st. the feeling, if any, that was manifested when the *Kansas Farmer* was named as the official State paper was not as stated because of the desire of "A few delegates" to have "a certain local paper" named for the place, but because of the prevailing sentiment in the convention that the *Kansas Farmer*, although a good agricultural journal, is not sufficiently in accord with the sentiment of the Order, and not sufficiently aggressive in its support, to be selected as an official State paper.

2nd. If there were any delegates present who "had been instructed" to have the *Kansas Farmer* named they certainly did not materialize on the floor of the convention, while several delegates did state that they were positively instructed to oppose the *Farmer*. That there were delegates present who favored this selection is not denied, but if they favored it by instruction they did not so state in the convention.

3d. So far as holding it to be "impracticable to try and build up a local paper to the pretension of a state paper," the almost unanimous sentiment of the convention was in favor of establishing a paper owned and controlled exclusively by the Order and published exclusively in its interest, and no fears were entertained or expressed as to the impracticability of building up such a paper not only to the "pretention" but to the actuality of a state paper when the proper time comes to undertake this enterprise.

When the question came up for consideration several papers were named and their merits were briefly discussed; among the number the *Dexter Free Press*, the *Kansas Commuter* and the *Advocate*. These papers are all out spoken Alliance papers from principle and will continue to be aggressive in their advocacy of the principles and interests of the Order without regard to any action of the State Alliance upon the subject of a State paper. We believe with a majority of the delegates at the convention that

the interests of the Order served by the establishment per under the exclusive management of the State Alliance and so stated an opinion upon the floor of the convention. While the recognition of the State Alliance would without a doubt give us prestige and financial support not so readily attained by other means we are not sure that it would not also restrict our independence in some matters that would render such recognition in a measure disadvantageous, and we are satisfied to work in a good cause in our own way trusting to the good sense of Alliance men for our support. We presume the other papers named are animated by the same spirit, and when the question to lay upon the table prevailed we believe the action was for the best interests of the Order at the present time.

4th. The *Farmer* says: "The motion to select an 'organ' was tabled and the question of a state paper remains as it was before this meeting."

Not exactly. At the meeting of the State officers at Wichita the *Kansas Farmer* was designated as the official paper until the meeting of the State Alliance. By laying the question of a State paper upon the table therefore, the matter remains as it was before the meeting of the State officers at Wichita, and not as it was before the meeting of the Alliance. The statement of the *Farmer* is calculated to mislead those who were not cognizant of all the facts, to a belief that the *Farmer* remains the official State paper, when the convention simply decided to have no state paper at the present time.

With the exception of these slight inaccuracies the report of the *Farmer* is correct.



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